Mineral King's: A flash in the pan

National Park Service
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Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks

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HIGH COUNTRY HIKING UPDATES

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **Eagle Lake:** Mosquitoes have hatched and biting with them are the fish.
- **Farewell Gap:** The views of the historic mining site are worth the wind.
- **Franklin Lake:** Great camping can be found 100 ft. from the water.
- **Franklin Pass:** Amazing views of Rattle Snake Canyon
- **Glacier Pass & Hands & Knees :** Fun, Fun, Fun for those who like alpine foot travel.
- **Monarch Lakes:** Beautiful amphitheaters carved by glaciers.
- **Sawtooth Pass:** Use caution hiking on the decomposed granite on both sides of the pass.
- **Timber Gap:** Quick access to an amazing forest.

A Big Wild Birthday

What will you be getting big "W" (wilderness) for it's 50th birthday? There is still time to plan. The concept of wilderness was born into legislation on September 3rd 1964 with the statement,

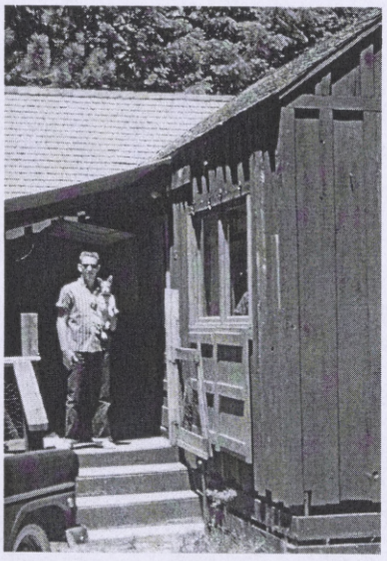
"A wilderness, in contrast to those areas where man and his works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and it's community of life are untrammeled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain." (www.wilderness50th.org)

The wilderness Act of 1964 designated 9.1 million acres of wilderness and didn't stop there. Today there is now 109 million acres of designated wilderness in the United States.

Join us in celebrating this historic event by exploring the wilderness of Mineral King and sharing with friends and family what wilderness means to you.

Franklin Lakes in Mineral King (NPS photo)

Cochrun Cabin Returns to Historical Footprint



Larry Cochrun standing in front of their cabin on leave from the Coast Guard Academy 1961. (Cochrun photo)

In the 1920's locals from around the Kings, Kaweah, Tule, and Kern drainages came up to Mineral King to build summer cabins and escape the summer heat of the Central Valley.

Charles J. Hammer and his wife Alice did the same. In 1928 they came up the Mineral King road and built their one-room cabin and outhouse in an area known as "below-the-gate." In the early 30's Charles added two rooms to the cabin, making it an "L" shape.

Larry Cochrun, grandson of Charles, came up to their cabin for the first time at four months old. He recalls spending his summers as a youth up here, "We were allowed to run free from below-the-gate to the dip."

As he got older the Sierra Nevada mountains proposed the only limits and Continued on Page 2.

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Above, A Black Bear looking for acorns in a Blue Oak tree. Below, Sandra Herrera holding a sedated black bear. (NPS photos)

During the winter of 1969, heavy snows crushed the whole thing.

Black Bears Are Bulking Up, or at Least Are Trying to.

Flowers are turning to fruit and the black bears in Mineral King area eating as many of them as they can. If you were to ask a bear why they are eating so much they would let you know that surely the summer will not last forever and winter is not far away. You better eat anything available and store as much fat as you can for a long winter slumber.

Sandra Herrera (Bear Technician at Sequoia and Kings Canyon National parks) will tell you, "As we come to the end of the summer season, black bears will begin to prepare for the winter by entering a phenophase (life-cycle-stage) known as "Hyperphagia", which literally means "excessive eating." **They will increase their daily calorie intake from 8,000-15,000 to 15,000-20,000 calories per day.**

With the onset of fall, acorns and sugar pine cones will become a major source of food for bears. It is too early in the season to know if drought has affected these resources. Now more than ever, we humans must protect these bears from becoming food-conditioned to our food sources.

Storing all scented items safely from bears, will help keep these bears wild.

A cub of the year. (NPS photo)

Cochrun Cabin cont.

over time the ownership of the cabin fell into his hands.

"During the winter of 1969 heavy snows crushed the whole thing," Larry noted, "leaving the back bedroom and bathroom the only salvageable parts of the structure." The next summer the family had to move into their one-room bunkhouse built just before WWII. In the bunkhouse was a bed, a stove, and a little sink. There also was a propane fridge in the adjacent shed.

Now several years latter Larry and Mary Cochrun are finishing the rebuild of their cabin. Mary Cochrun, sometimes confused for Mary Trauger, has volunteered eight years of service here in Mineral King and for the last four years has been wearing the green and grey through the campgrounds. She is always willing to help visitors discover (and sometimes remember) how precious this landscape is.

The crew bringing back the historic footprint of the cabin is Timber Gap Timber Systems. They are working hard to have everything buttoned up by the time snowflakes fly.

The Cochrun's are very grateful for this opportunity and are looking forward to their eight-month-old granddaughter Alice visiting for years to come.

Larry and Mary Cochrun's Cabin rebuild is getting close to completion. (NPS photo)

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